



# PROGRAM NEWS

United States Agency for International Development

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**USAID/Nicaragua  
Development Program  
1998-2003  
(U.S. Millions of Dollars)**

<i>Rule of Law and Good Governance</i>	<i>43.6</i>
<i>Small Producers</i>	<i>47.0</i>
<i>Natural Resources</i>	<i>14.0</i>
<i>Healthy Families</i>	<i>35.0</i>
<i>Primary Education</i>	<i>17.5</i>
<i>Food Aid</i>	<i>55.0</i>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>US\$ 212.1</b>



## Promoting Better Health—10 Years of USAID Support for Profamilia Clinics

**Boaco, Nicaragua**—It takes Jennifer Martinez two hours to travel from her rural community to the Profamilia clinic in Boaco, a mid-size town located 88 kilometers east of Managua. A regular client at the clinic for the last three years, Martinez says the long trip is worth it.

“The service is so much better than the public health center and it is within my budget,” said Martinez, who was waiting to have stitches removed from a small operation performed at the Profamilia clinic.

Since it opened in 1992, the Boaco clinic has added a variety of medical services that have attracted more patients. Recently, medical staff delivered the first baby born at the Boaco Profamilia clinic.

The Boaco clinic is one of 17



*The clinic in Boaco is one of 17 Profamilia clinics receiving USAID support to provide Nicaraguans high quality, low cost health care. A \$10.6 million USAID grant focuses on family planning and reproductive health.*

run by Profamilia, a Nicaraguan nongovernmental organization founded in 1968 to promote better maternal and child health care. Profamilia opened its first clinic in Managua in 1973 and has since established a network of health centers throughout the country that provided high quality, low cost health care to more than 130,000 Nicaraguans in the year 2001.

USAID has provided assistance to Profamilia since 1992. The current USAID grant to Profamilia of \$10.6 million focuses on increasing access to family planning and reproductive health services for Nicaraguan men and women. Using an “integrated” approach to health care, Profamilia offers a wide variety



*Dr. Martha Vargas, a pediatrician, checks a patient at the Ciudad Jardin Profamilia clinic in Managua. The clinic receives up to 130 clients a day.*

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## 10 Years of USAID Support for Profamilia Clinics

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of services including general medicine, gynecology, pediatrics, prenatal care and delivery, laboratory, ultrasound and dental care. Family planning and reproductive health services include education and counseling and the promotion of condoms and other contraceptives. Counseling and educational services are also provided to adolescents on teenage pregnancy and HIV/AIDS. Profamilia has set up 11 youth clubs throughout the country where teenagers participate in sports and recreational activities and community service projects. The clubs offer workshops on sex education and reproductive health, self esteem and family relations.

Profamilia also promotes family planning and reproductive health with a special vehicle outfitted with video equipment and loudspeakers called the "cinemovil". The "cinemovil" travels to outlying communities bringing family planning messages and HIV/AIDS prevention education through entertainment, contests and prizes. The "cinemovil" made 115 presentations last year reaching an audience of more than 39,000 people.

Under the Hurricane Mitch Reconstruction Program, USAID provided an additional \$5.6 million for the construction of six modern Profamilia clinics in areas of the country affected by the hurricane.



The Profamilia clinics offer a wide variety of health services including recently added dental care. Dr. Milagros Vindel attends a patient at the Monseñor Lezcano Profamilia Clinic in Managua.

The new clinics operate as franchises in which the medical staff play an active role in promoting high quality health services 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to increase the number of patients.

However, in many cases the best promoters of the Profamilia clinics are the satisfied customers.

"A friend recommended I try Profamilia," said Adriana Ramirez, a first-time patient at the Ciudad Jardin Profamilia clinic in Managua. "She told me that the prices were reasonable and the service excellent."

Rosa Mendez first came to Profamilia after a recommendation by her sister-in-law. Before, she used the public health center located in her town about 46 kilometers from the capital. But now she would rather make a trip into Managua to the Profamilia clinic.

Said Mendez: "There is more privacy here and it is very hygienic. I have more confidence in the medical services."



Many women come to Profamilia clinics for the privacy and personal attention they receive from the medical staff.

### 5000 Condoms Sold in 24 Hours

*Every year during Easter Week, Nicaraguans flock to the beaches along the country's Pacific coast. Food and drink stands, set up at the most popular beaches, do a brisk business during the holiday week. Following that lead, Profamilia promoters set up shop at the three most popular beaches last Easter week and offered a special product to beachgoers—condoms. At the cut rate price of 30 cents, Nicaraguans could purchase a tri pack of Body Guard condoms and participate in a roulette game to win prizes. In 24 hours, Profamilia sold 5,000 condoms.*



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